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## CONTRIBUTION BY STÉPHANE PÉRICHON TO THE 5TH FORUM ON STRENGTH THROUGH DIVERSITY

### Lycée Laplace—allcomers welcome

1. The Lycée Laplace, a vocational high school specialised in housing and public works, welcomes students from all over the education system and beyond, drawn to the specific type of schooling it offers. The courses available range from the CAP<sup>1</sup> certificate—a level 5 qualification, to the more advanced BTS<sup>2</sup>—a level 3 qualification.
2. Our establishment of one thousand students is located in Caen, France. It has boarding facilities for 470 students arriving from many different schools in the agglomeration of Caen La Mer, which has a population of some 200 000 inhabitants.
3. Our CAP courses are open to young people with cognitive disabilities through our specialised ULIS<sup>3</sup> class, to others with serious and ongoing educational difficulties arriving from SEGPA<sup>4</sup> units, as well as to those who have themselves chosen to take a preparatory year<sup>5</sup> for a vocational qualification and 15-year-olds from the general curriculum. For some years, Laplace has accepted young EANAs<sup>6</sup> into its CAP courses, including students who are non-native speakers of French and who have recently arrived in France. This openness and acceptance has always been natural, unforced, and has never caused any problems.
4. Before September 2014, there were only a small number of EANAs.

### First surge in admissions

5. At the beginning of the school year in 2014, a large number of EANAs were allocated to our CAP courses, and some even to our Professional Baccalaureate, a level 4 qualification. This large intake raised some concerns among the teaching staff. These concerns held by the teaching staff did not stem from the students themselves but rather from the fear of not being able to do their jobs properly or provide the right response to specific problems faced by these young people who now accounted for up to a third of some classes.

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<sup>1</sup> *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle*

<sup>2</sup> *Brevet de technicien supérieur*

<sup>3</sup> *Unité Localisée pour l'Inclusion Scolaire*

<sup>4</sup> *Section Enseignement Générale et Professionnelle Adaptée*

<sup>5</sup> *3ème Préparatoire à l'enseignement professionnel*

<sup>6</sup> *Elèves Allophones Nouvellement Arrivés en France*

6. In answer to these concerns, I suggested we start a classroom initiative that would allow all of the different parties to meet and engage with each other. The idea was for them to identify the issues faced by the others and to encourage them to exchange professional practices for the purpose of receiving these students in the best possible educational and pastoral conditions.

7. A two-day in-house programme was put together, attended by:

- CASNAV<sup>7</sup>—the centre responsible for the schooling of non-native French speaking students who have recently arrived in France and children from itinerant families and the travelling community;
- Middle-school teachers in UPE2A<sup>8</sup>—the teaching unit for non-native French speaking students who have recently arrived in France;
- Middle-school teachers in UPE2A NSA<sup>9</sup>—the teaching unit for non-native French speaking students who have recently arrived in France and have no previous schooling;
- Teachers from the Lycée’s general programme;
- Teachers from the Lycée’s vocational programme;
- CPE<sup>10</sup>—principal educational advisors based in schools;
- Social workers working in schools; and
- COP<sup>11</sup>—now renamed PsyEN, for *psychologue de l’éducation nationale*, school psychologists.

8. After completing this training programme, the Lycée’s teaching staff were reassured, better informed and better equipped for the job, with the added benefit of a contact list of professionals who could help the teaching staff find solutions and support to prevent them from feeling alone with their problems. We were convinced, however, that we needed to organise a UPE2A in the Lycée, with a teacher specialised in the teaching of French as a second language.

9. The local education authority began setting up a UPE2A NSA for students over the age of sixteen. This was followed in September 2017 by a UPE2A Lycée Professionnel (LP, or vocational high school) for the Caen agglomeration (there are five vocational high schools in the Caen agglomeration) at the Lycée Laplace.

10. During the school year 2017-18, the local education authority decided to open a second UPE2A, intending to give it a remit beyond that of an LP. Today, therefore, there is a UPE2A for North Caen in our lycée, for the four lycées in the northern part of the Caen area, a UPE2A NSA for the whole agglomeration, a reception structure for students in general or in technological education and those waiting for a school placement, and, as of

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<sup>7</sup> *Centre Académique pour la Scolarisation des élèves allophones Nouvellement Arrivés*

<sup>8</sup> *Unité Pédagogique pour Élèves Allophones Arrivants*

<sup>9</sup> *Unité Pédagogique pour Élèves Allophones Arrivants Non Scolarisés Antérieurement*

<sup>10</sup> *Conseillers principaux d’éducation*

<sup>11</sup> *Conseillers d’orientation*

September 2018, a UPE2A for South Caen, for the five lycées in that zone. The idea is to now offer French-language support to students with good educational attainment in their countries of origin, and help them on to general and technological baccalaureate courses.

### An unprecedented wave of new arrivals

11. Every month, the DSDEN<sup>12</sup> department of the local education authority hosts a meeting of the board which allocates school places to EANAs, under the oversight of the Academic Director. I sit on this board as a Deputy Head. The board allocates places to EANAs who are fifteen years old or younger and who must attend school under French law. The UPE2As and UPE2A NSAs were filled quickly. We had to create new ways of accommodating the EANAs, allocating them places in their local middle schools. We decided to opt for the immersion of these young people in the standard system by providing additional support for the teaching staff. This new approach enabled us to cope with an unprecedented wave of new arrivals in our *département*. Academic year 2017-18 saw particularly high numbers of school-age children arriving: the number of EANAs aged sixteen and over for whom we needed to find places doubled between 2016-17 and 2017-18, from 145 to 298.

12. The situation of EANAs aged sixteen and over is also examined, but it means matching the student's original educational attainment with their French language proficiency and their educational choices. In most cases, these young people have low educational attainment, or none at all, because they have not previously attended school; they speak little or no French, and those who do speak some French are, in many cases, unable to write it. Almost all EANAs want to take short courses, such as CAPs, and their preference is for production, often construction. Their goal is to obtain a qualification that allows them to look for and find a job at the age of eighteen in order to be permitted to stay in France and earn some money to survive.

13. Very quickly we found that we had filled all places available in the CAP courses—there is an upper limit on numbers in the technical facilities for security reasons—and over-enrolled the high school UPE2As.

14. At every board meeting, we looked for solutions, but invariably found ourselves with a waiting list of young people who had yet to be placed.

15. The last time the board met in April there still remained a large number of EANAs without placements, a significant number of whom were interested in plumbing. At the Lycée Laplace, we offer vocational baccalaureates in plumbing (qualifying students as installation technicians for energy and HVAC systems or maintenance technicians for energy and HVAC systems) but no CAPs. It is difficult to put these young people straight into a vocational baccalaureate course because of their low level of educational attainment. A CAP involves 40% practical work, 20% technological theory and 40% general education. A vocational baccalaureate, on the other hand, involves 20% practical work, 30% technological theory and 50% general education, and students are expected to reach a higher standard.

16. Because the EANAs were not currently in school, this also raised the issue of place allocation in September 2018. If they were integrated into the school system, they could apply through the AFFELNET procedure (*AFFectation des ELèves par le NET*) which is a

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<sup>12</sup> *Direction des services départementaux de l'éducation nationale*

computerised placement system to register for a CAP in June in order to secure a place in a course. Finding a place in a CAP is more complicated and uncertain for young people not in school. So what could we do to help them?

### **When you cannot see your way out of a problem, invent a solution!**

17. At the last board meeting of the academic year 2017-18, I thought of setting up a programme for the young French-speakers who wanted to train as plumbers. The syllabus would consist of vocational training, French and mathematics, and time spent doing on-the-job training, because some young people had expressed an interest in performing an apprenticeship.

18. The timetable was as follows: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at school and Thursday and Friday at work. At school, 4 x 3 hours of practical work, two hours of French and one hour of mathematics. For the two days of work experience, the young people's reception facilities would have to look for placements and the teachers would track the student's work progress and coordinate with the placement supervisor. For the end of the academic year, we decided to offer a four-week placement as we do for CAP students.

19. I invited two vocational teachers, a French teacher and a mathematics teacher, to take part in the project and both accepted without hesitation. I approached the IEN-IO<sup>13</sup>, the education inspectorate in charge of information and careers, which obtained the financing for the project (within a mere hundred hours) from the education budget. I asked the Lycée's works bureau to provide the safety gear and the placement agreements.

20. Then I asked the social worker for financial support for some young candidates. The organisations—the departmental council for Calvados, France Terre d'Asile and Médecins du Monde—moved fast to register these young people with the programme because these organisations had been struggling to find solutions for them. I obtained six different contacts for the nine candidates. At first, the project only had five open slots to be filled but nine young people were finally accepted, some of whom had other projects that were more or less finalised. So I approached the painting teacher and the roofing teacher to ask each of them to take one student for two half-days in addition to the basic programme. The students are very satisfied because they are able to take both courses.

21. We paid for the practical work out of our own budget because vocational training has a cost in terms of materials and the use of machines.

22. The school doctor agreed to fast-track the medical examinations required to allow minors who are at least sixteen years old to use dangerous machines.

23. This was therefore a project that called on a lot of different people but produced a genuinely positive result.

24. Six young people have joined the Lycée Laplace for a CAP in painting, woodwork and roofing or for a vocational baccalaureate for energy system installation technicians, two are studying for a CAP in another lycée in the Caen agglomeration and one has moved to another part of France for reasons unknown.

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<sup>13</sup> *Inspecteur de l'éducation nationale chargé de l'information et de l'orientation*

## Strength through Diversity

### *First and foremost, it is inclusion that gives us strength*

25. Inclusion is about quality of life and living conditions. The Lycée is quick to draw from the money set aside for social needs in the Lycée Social Fund as soon as it identifies the need for it. This ranges from small amounts for material assistance to free school meals or free boarding. We are lucky that our departmental Council supports unaccompanied minors aged between 16 and 18.

26. Inclusion is also a feeling of belonging. We placed all of our young people in the DELF French language course at the right level for their ability and they all successfully passed. On 30 November 2018, we will hold a formal award ceremony.

27. We measure the success of inclusion by the quality of relations between the different groups of students. Our young EANAs have integrated just like all our other students. They are not a separated group and they form friendships with their classmates. They can also provide an interesting additional perspective for our teaching staff, who can use their origins to improve understanding of the geopolitical world during their lessons. We think that our small daily contribution will, through these young people, have an impact on society in the present and the future. Both new arrivals and those who arrived before increase our country's resources.

### *Second, human commitment gives us strength*

28. The example of the project that was organised at the end of the year for our “plumbers” demonstrates how individuals can mobilise an entire organisation and the people in it to allow a group of young people to integrate into our society. This mobilisation does need resources but those resources are modest and probably dwarfed by the cost to society of social exclusion.

29. Our establishment also came up with the resources to respond in the best way possible when faced with a big influx of young people. We did not settle for the statutory minimum of schooling up to the age of sixteen, but instead we tried to update the UPE2A, create new ones and devise innovative schemes to find the right response for all of these young people and to give them a chance to integrate.

### *Finally, values give us strength*

30. These young EANAs, let us not be afraid to call them young migrants, have values that many young French people have lost: regular attendance, punctuality, good manners and commitment. The teachers in the general curriculum notice and comment every day on their attentiveness and keenness to learn. The teaching staff in the vocational curriculum say that they acquire professional skills more quickly because of their dedication and their appetite for learning; that they are therefore more committed and more self-reliant. The businesses, one of which took three students on from the new project, also highly praise the trainees for the values just described. One business leader I met recently wanted to know when we would have more young people for them to train.

## What lies in the year ahead?

31. At the level of the *département*, we aim, in a new induction scheme, to integrate young people according to their specific educational, social, healthcare, career and even

integration (apprenticeship) needs. Our ambition is also to ensure greater simplicity in the placement process, to ensure that every establishment can receive these young people in the right conditions, to make sure that all students make progress and are able to obtain their qualifications, and finally to identify and train qualified staff to help them integrate and offer high-quality teaching.

32. In order to expand reception facilities, the remit of the teachers in the UPE2A has also been expanded. Not only will they be responsible for training students by teaching French as a foreign language, but they will also be charged with supporting the staff in establishments receiving EANAs for the first time.

33. At the first meeting of the board in October it was suggested that arrivals would continue to increase, raising also the numbers of young people aged over sixteen without placements in school programmes such as these. In my establishment, our CAP and vocational baccalaureate courses are already completely full, as is the UPE2A. In the coming months and years, we must be creative in devising new solutions for helping these young people whose decision to flee their country was not an easy one.